protected by the village community. Permission to cut and carry grass free of cost should be given so that stall feeding is promoted.

(x) No agriculture should be permitted on the forest land.

(xi) Along with trees for fuel, fodder and timber, the village community may be premited to plant such fruit trees as would fit in with the overall scheme of afforestation, such as aonla, Imli, mango, mahua etc. as well as shrubs, legumes and grasses which would meet local needs, help soil and water conservation, and enrich the degraded soils/land. Even indigenous medicinal plants may be grown according to the requirement and preference of beneficiaries.

(xii) Cutting of trees should not be permitted before they are ripe for harvesting. The forest department also should not cut the trees on the forest land being protected by the village communities except in the manner prescribed in the Working Scheme. In case of emergency needs, the village communities should be taken into confidence.

(xiii) The benefit of people's participation should go to the village communities and not to commercial or other interests which may try to derive benefit in their names. The selection of beneficiaries should therefore, be done from only those families which are willing to participate through their personal efforts.

(xiv) The Forest Department should closely supervise the works. If the beneficiaries and/or the Voluntary /NGO fail or neglect to protect the area from grazing, encroachment or do not perform the operations prescribed in the Working Scheme in a satisfactory manner, the usefructory benefits should be with drawn without paying compensation to anyone for any work that might have been done prior to it. Suitable provisions in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for thus purpose should be incorporated.

Yours faithfully,
Sd/-
(Mahesh Prasad)

Secretary to the Government of India. Recommendation by scope to disband the MTNL or merge with DOT

429. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that SCOPE has recently recommended that there should be no atempt to disband the MTNL and/or merge it with DOT, as this would be retrograde step; and

(b) whether the SCOPE (Standing Committee on Public Enterprises) spelt out that only an organisational structure such as MTNL, could satisfactorily deliver high technology consumer services while making a profit, and any other alternative may warrant Government's budgetary support?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JAI PARKASH): (a) and (b) SCOPE might have made such suggestions to the High Level Committee set up by the Government to suggest restructuring of the Department of Telecom. Report of the Committee is awaited.

ECO-System of the Gulf

430. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the reports that eco-system of the Gulf is at an end that the shores have been irredeemably damaged due to the oil slick;

(b) whether Government are also aware that even though there was a huge spill during the Iran-Iraq war, comparable in size to the present one, its effects have not been permanent or significant;

(c) whether Government are aware that although the Mina-al-Ahmadi pollution is at least three times larger than the Torrey Canyon Spill, in view of the tropical climate in the enclosed sea Gulf, and the benefit of microbial action which breaks down the toxic chemicals in crude oil leaving minerals, the impact of Gulf oil slick would be far less; and

(d) if so, what steps Government propose to take to educate the public on these exaggerated reports of environmentalists?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (d) The eco-system of the Gulf is being studied by UN agencies and countries concerned. No conclusive reports are available..

Deputy Prime Minister's visit to Oslo

431. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Deputy Prime Minister, Shri Devi Lal, during his recent visit to Oslo, committed a breach of protocol by not attending a reception which was advanced by the new king of Norway; and

(b) if so, what has been the reaction of the Government of Norway thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI KAMAL MORARKA): (a) Deputy Prime Minister did not commit any breach of Protocol. He attended the Reception of the new King of Norway.

(b) does not arise.

Quota of telephone connections recommended by M.Ps.

432. DR. RATNAKAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Members of Parliament are entitled to recommend telephone connections out of their quota fixed by the Government recently;

(b) if so, how many recommendations have been made by Members of Parliament since the announcement of the scheme and how many telephone connections have been sanctioned so far; and

(c) whether Government have received numerous complaints from Members of Parliament for not sanctioning of telephones promptly and non-intimation to Members of Parliament and if so, what steps are being taken for sending prompt replies to Members of Parliament in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JAI PARKASH): (a) Yes, Sir. An announcement to this effect has already been made.

(b) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

(c) No, Sir.

Lift irrigation potential in A.P.

433. SHRI TALARI MANOHAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total lift irrigation potential in Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) the extent to which it has been exploited so far?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) and (b) Out of 74.90 lakh hectares